

Black Is White

by
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Illustrations by
RAY WALTERS

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"In God's name, Yvonne, what is this you are saying? What have you against me—against him?"

"What? I shall come to that. I did not stop to consider all that I should have to overcome. First, there was your soul, your honor, your integrity to consider. I could see nothing else but triumph over James Brood. To gain my end it was necessary that I should be his wife. I became his wife—I deliberately took that step in order to make complete my triumph over him. I became the wife of the man I hated with all my soul, Frederic. So you can see how far I was willing to go to—ah, it was a hard thing to do! But I did not shrink. I went into it without faltering, without a single thought of the cost to myself. He was to pay for all that, too, in the end. Look into my eyes, Frederic. I want to ask you a question. Will you go away with me? Will you take me?"

He returned her look steadily. "No!" "That is all I want to hear you say. It means the end. I have done all that could be done and I have failed. Thank God, I have failed!" She came swiftly to him and, before he was aware of her intention, clutched his hand and pressed it to her lips. He was shocked to find that a sudden gust of tears was wetting his hand.

"Oh, Yvonne!" he cried miserably. She was sobbing convulsively. He looked down upon her dark, bowed head and again felt the mastering desire to crush her slender, beautiful body in his arms. The spell of her was upon him again, but now he real-



"Ah, It Was a Hard Thing to Do!"

ized that the appeal was to his spirit and not to his flesh—as it had been all along, he was beginning to suspect.

"Don't pity me," she choked out. "This will pass, as everything else has passed. I am proud of you now, Frederic. You are splendid. Not many men could have resisted in this hour of despair. You have been cast off, despised, degraded, humiliated. You were offered the means to retaliate. You—"

"And I was tempted!" he cried bitterly. "For the moment I was—"

"And now what is to become of me?" she asked.

His heart went cold. "You—you will leave him? You will go back to Paris? Good Lord, Yvonne, it will be a blow to him. He has had one fearful slash in the back. This will break him."

"At least, I may have that consolation," she cried, straightening up in an effort to revive her waning purpose. "Yes, I shall go. I cannot stay here now. I—"

She paused and shuddered.

"What, in heaven's name, have you

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against me—against him? What does it all mean? How you must have hated him to—"

Hated him? Oh, how feeble the word is! Hate! There should be a word that strikes more terror to the soul than that one. But wait! You shall know everything. You shall have the story from the beginning. There is much to tell and there will be consolation—ay, triumph for you in the story I shall tell. First, let me say this to you: When I came here I did not know that there was a Lydia Desmond. I would have hurt that poor girl, but it would not have been a lasting pain. In my plans, after I came to know her there grew a beautiful alternative through which she should know great happiness. Oh, I have planned well and carefully, but I was ruthless. I would have crushed her with him rather than to have failed. But it is all a dream that has passed and I am awake. It was the most cruel but the most magnificent dream—ah, but I dare not think of it. As I stand here before you now, Frederic, I am shorn of all my power. I could not strike him as I might have done a month ago. Even as I was cursing him but a moment ago I realized that I could not have gone on with the game. Even as I begged you to take your revenge, I knew that it was not myself who urged, but the thing that was having its death struggle within me.

"Go on. Tell me. Why do you stop?"

She was glancing fearfully toward the Hindu's door. "There is one man in this house who knows. He reads my every thought. He does not know all, but he knows me. He has known from the beginning that I was not to be trusted. That man is never out of my thoughts. I fear him, Frederic—I fear him as I fear death. If he had not been here I—I believe I should have fared anything. I could have taken you away with me, months ago. But he worked his spell and I was afraid. I faltered. He knew that I was afraid, for he spoke to me one day of the beautiful serpents in his land that were cowards to spite of the death they could deal with one flash of their fangs. You were intoxicated. I am a thing of beauty. I can charm as he—"

"God knows that is true," he said hoarsely.

"But enough of that! I was stricken with my own poison. Go to the door! See if he is there. I fear—"

"No one is near," said he, after striding swiftly to both doors, listening at one and peering out through the other.

"You will have to go away, Frederic. I shall have to go. But we shall not go together. In my room I have kept hidden the sum of ten thousand dollars, waiting for the day to come when I should use it to complete the game I have played. I knew that you would have no money of your own. I was prepared even for that. Look again! See if anyone is there? I feel—I feel that someone is near us. Look, I say."

He obeyed. "See! There is no one near." He held open the door to the hall. "You must speak quickly. I am to leave this house in an hour. I was given the hour."

"Ah, I can see by your face that you hate him! It is well. That is something. It is but little I know, after all I have wished for—but it is something for me to treasure—something for me to take back with me to the one sacred little spot in this beastly world of men and women."

"You are the most incomprehensible—"

"Am I not beautiful, Frederic? Tell me!" She came quite close to him.

"You are the most beautiful woman in all the world," he said absently.

"And I have wasted all my beauty—I have lent it to unloveliness and it has not been destroyed! It is still with me, is it not? I have not lost it in—"

"You are beautiful beyond words—beyond anything I have ever imagined," said he, suddenly passing his hand over his brow.

"You would have loved me if it had not been for Lydia?"

"I couldn't have helped myself. I—I fear I—faltered in my— Good God, are you still trying to tempt me? Are you still asking me to go away with you?"

A hoarse cry came from the doorway behind them—a cry of pain and anger that struck terror to their souls.

They had not heard his approach.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Shot That Failed.

Transfixed, they watched him take two or three steps into the room. At his back was the swarthy Hindu, his eyes gleaming like coals of fire in the shadowy light.

"James!" fell tremulously from the lips of Yvonne. She swayed toward him as Ranjab grasped his arm from behind. Frederic saw the flash of something bright as it passed from the brown hand to the white one. He did not at once comprehend.

"It happened once," came hoarsely from the throat of James Brood. "It shall not happen again. Thank you, Ranjab."

Then Frederic knew! The Hindu had slipped a revolver into his master's hand!

"It gives me great pleasure, Yvonne, to relieve you of that damned, rotten, worthless thing you call your life."

As he raised his arm, Frederic sprang forward with a shout of horror. Scarcely realizing what he did, he hurled Yvonne violently to one side.

It was all over in the twinkling of an eye. There was a flash, the crash of an explosion, a puff of smoke and the smell of burnt powder.

Frederic stood perfectly still for an instant, facing the soft cloud that rose from the pistol barrel, an expression

of vague amazement in his face. Then his hand went uncertainly to his breast.

Already James Brood had seen the red blotch that spread with incredible swiftness—blood red against the snowy white of the broad shirt bosom. Glaring with wide-open eyes at the horrid spot, he stood there with the pistol still levelled in a petrified hand.

"Good God, father, you've—why, you've—"

struggled from Frederic's writhing lips, and then his knees sagged; an instant later they gave way with a rush and he dropped heavily to the floor.

There was not a sound in the room. Suddenly Brood made a movement quick and spasmodic. At the same to-



"Sahib! Sahib!" He hissed.

stant Ranjab flung himself forward and grasped his master's arm. He had turned the revolver upon himself! The muzzle was almost at his temple when the Hindu seized his hand in a grip of iron.

"Sahib! Sahib!" he hissed. "What would you do? Wrenching the weapon from the stiff, unresisting fingers, he hurled it across the room."

"My God!" groaned Brood. His tall body swayed forward, but his legs refused to carry him. The Hindu caught him as he was sinking limply to his knees. With a tremendous effort of the will, Brood succeeded in conquering the black unconsciousness that was assailing him. He straightened up to his full height, and with trembling fingers pointed to the prostrate figure on the floor. "The pistol, Ranjab! Where is it? Give it me! Man, man, can I live after that? I have killed my son—my own son! Quick, man!"

"Sahib!" cried the Hindu, wringing his hands. "I cannot! I cannot!" "I command you! The pistol!"

Without a word the Hindu, fatalist, slave, pagan that he was, turned to do his master's bidding. It was not for him to say nay. It was not for him to oppose the will of the master, but to obey.

All this time, Yvonne was crouching against the table, her horrified gaze upon the great red blotch that grew to terrible proportions as she watched.

She had not moved, she had not breathed, she had not taken her hands from her ears where she had placed them at the sound of the explosion.

"Blood! It is blood!" she moaned, and for the first time since the shot was fired her husband glanced at the one for whom the bullet was intended.

An expression of incredulity leaped into his face, as if he could not believe his senses. She was alive and unharmed! His bullet had not touched her. His brain fumbled for the explanation of this miracle.

"Blood!" she wailed again, a long, shuddering word that came not from her lips but from the very depths of her terror-stricken soul.

Slowly Brood's mind worked out of the maze. His shot had gone straight, but Frederic himself had leaped into its path to save this miserable creature who would have damned his soul if life had been spared to him.

Ranjab crawled to his side, his eyes covered with one arm, the other extended. Blindly the master felt for the pistol, not once removing his eyes from the pallid figure against the table. His fingers closed upon the weapon. Then the Hindu looked up, warned by the strange voice that spoke to him from the mind of his master. He saw the arm slowly extend itself with a sinister hand directed straight at the unconscious figure of the woman. This time Brood was making sure of his aim—so sure that the lithe Hindu had time to spring to his feet and grasp once more the hand that held the weapon.

"Master! Master!" he cried out.

Brood turned to look at his man in sheer bewilderment. What could all this mean? What was the matter with the man?

"Down, Ranjab!" he commanded in a low, cautious tone, as he would have used in speaking to a dog when the game was run to earth.

"There is but one bullet left, sahib," cried the man.

"Only one is required," said the master haltingly.

"You have killed your son. This bullet is for yourself."

"Yes! Yes! But—but she! She lives! She—"

The Hindu struck his own breast

Announcement

I wish to announce to my customers and friends, that I have moved my grocery stock, from the Post Office Block on Washington St., to my new building on Broadway, just east of Hudson & Houston Lumber yard.

In changing my location, I have also changed my business to a spot cash basis. I have been a citizen of Ardmore, for the past eight years, and have been engaged in the grocery business a little over seven years, and my experience has taught me, that a cash basis is best for both customer and merchant. In making this change of location, I am getting away from high rents, and in putting my business on a cash basis, I am getting away from possible losses in bad accounts, so I figure by giving my customers the benefit in price of both these savings, should make it to their interest to continue trading with me, on a cash basis. I have one of the very nicest store rooms in which to do business, in Ardmore, all new and clean, and I am very anxious that all of my old customers, as well as new ones, visit my place of business, see what I have, and get my prices before buying elsewhere. But to those who cannot come, don't forget to phone all your wants in the grocery line to 391, and your order shall have my personal attention. I will also have Mr. Joe Haynes with me as solicitor, and he will call and take your orders daily, and will give you the price and service that should make it to your interest to give him your orders. Below I quote a few specials for Saturday, so, please, phone your orders to 391. In the future the style of my business will be

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Regular 25c R. B. M. Lemon Cling	25c can K. C. Baking Powder.....19c
Peaches, Sat. Special.....19c	Three 10c boxes of Crackers.....25c
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25c can Sliced Pine Apple.....19c	30c Santos P. B. Coffee.....20c
15c can Sliced Pine Apple.....11c	12 boxes Searchlight Matches.....40c
15c can Sauer Kraut.....10c	3-lb. Fancy Evaporated Peaches.....25c
15c can Sugar Corn.....10c	Dry Salt Pork, pound.....11½c
3-lb. can Tomatoes.....10c	Fancy Cabbage.....3c
Regular 15c pink Salmon.....10c	Fancy Smoked Hams, lb.....17½c
1 gal Blue Label Karo Syrup.....40c	Swift's Prem. Bacon, by the piece 30c
25c Package Oats.....19c	1-lb can Breakfast Delight Coffee 30c
15c Package Oats.....10c	Compound Lard, in Bulk.....10c

Yours Respectfully,

P. L. MARTIN

significantly. "Thy faithful servant re-

mains, sahib. Die, if thou wilt, but leave her to Ranjab. There is but one bullet left. It is for you. You must not be here to witness the death Ranjab, thy servant, shall inflict upon her. Shoot thyself now, if so be it, but spare thyself the sight of—"

He did not finish the sentence, but his strong, bony fingers went through the motion that told a more horrible story than words could have expressed. There was no mistaking his meaning. He had elected himself her executioner.

A ghastly look of comprehension flitted across Brood's face. For a second his mind slipped from one dread to another more appalling. He knew this man of his. He remembered the story of another killing in the hills of India. His gaze went from the brown fanatic's face to the white, tender, lovely throat of the woman—and a hoarse gasp broke from his lips.

"No! No! Not that!" he cried, and as the words rang out, Yvonne removed her horrified gaze from the blot of red and fixed it upon the face of her husband. She straightened up slowly and her arms fell limply to her sides.

"It was meant for me. Shoot, James!" she said, almost in a whisper.

(CONTINUED TOMORROW)

Held on Bond
Parcell, Okla., April 8.—Ernest Lewis, charged with larceny of ten head of cattle from S. L. Williams, was given a preliminary hearing here and was bound over to await the action of the district court. Lewis gave a \$1,000 bond for his appearance in district court and was released from custody. The information charges that Lewis sold the cattle for about half their value to George E. Eslick, who was also arrested in connection with the charge. Eslick has plead guilty and received a prison sentence.

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WANTED! Horses & Mules



From 15-1 to 16-1 hands high; age 5 to 10 years. Must be in good condition. Highest market prices will be paid.

Will be at Ardmore Horse and Mule Market, N. Caddo St., Ardmore, Okla., Friday, Saturday, Monday and Tuesday, April 9, 10, 12 and 13, 1915

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